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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/068,559	02/05/2002	C. Grant Willson	5119-07301	6950

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EXAMINER

BEISNER, WILLIAM H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1744

DATE MAILED: 06/26/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/068,559

Applicant(s)

WILLSON ET AL.

Examiner

William H. Beisner

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 50, 76 and 98-118 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 50, 76 and 98-118 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4/20/06 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any

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evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 50, 76 and 98-118 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walt et al.(US 6,327,410) in view of Felder et al.(US 6,232,066), Chang et al.(US 6,350,620) or Ravkin et al.(US 2003/0008323) taken further in view of Pope (US 5,496,997) and Dakss et al.(US 4,269,648).

The reference of Walt et al. discloses a method of sensing multiple analytes in a fluid that includes passing a fluid over a sensor array wherein the sensor array includes a plurality of sensing elements coupled to a supporting member, wherein a first portion of the sensing elements are configured to produce a signal in the presence of a first analyte and wherein a second portion of the sensing elements are configured to produce a signal in the presence of a second analyte. The first and second portions of the sensing elements have unique predetermined optical signatures or tags wherein the optical signature or tag of the first portion of sensing elements is different from the optical signature or tag of the second portion of sensing elements. The method includes monitoring a spectroscopic change of the sensing elements as the fluid is passed over the sensing array, wherein the spectroscopic change is caused by the interaction of the analyte with the sensing element and determining the unique optical signature of the sensing elements that undergo a spectroscopic change (See column 13, lines 8-24, and column 15, line 64, to column 16, line 20).

With respect to claim 76, while the reference of Walt et al. disclose the use of unique predetermined optical signatures or tags that include the use of beads of different size (See column 18, lines 48-58, and column 19, lines 6-13), claim 76 differs by reciting that the method employs sensing elements (beads) of different shapes wherein the sensing element undergoing a spectroscopic change is identified by its shape.

The reference of Felder et al. discloses that it is known in the art to provide analyte detection beads with unique optical signatures or tags wherein the beads can be of different size or shape (See column 8, lines 49-56).

The reference of Chang et al. discloses that it is known in the art to provide analyte detection beads with unique optical signatures or tags wherein the beads can be of different size or shape (See column 3, lines 33-39).

The reference of Ravkin et al. discloses that it is known in the art to provide analyte detection beads with unique optical signatures or tags wherein the beads can be of different size or shape (See paragraphs [0096], [0137] and [0139]).

In view of any of these teachings, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a unique optical signature with respect to the beads of the primary reference of Walt et al. using beads of different shapes for the known and expected result of providing an alternative means recognized in the art to achieve the same result, providing a means for optically distinguishing one sensing element from another. Use of beads of different shape rather than size would eliminate the need to employ different sized optical fibers required to detect the beads of different size. The same types of optical fibers would be capable of detecting beads of similar size but different shapes.

With respect to Claim 76, while the reference of Walt et al. discloses that immobilization of the different sensing elements to substrate (212) to form a sensing array includes placing the sensing elements in a liquid composition and curing the liquid composition to form a supporting member, wherein the sensing elements are at least partially embedded within the cured liquid composition (See column 17, line 47, to column 18, line 2), the claim further differs by reciting that the sensing elements are disposed **on or at an exterior surface of a cured liquid composition** for supporting the sensing elements.

The reference of Pope discloses that it is conventional in the art to immobilize an analysis particle (311) with respect to an optical fiber (312) using an adhesive composition (315).

The reference of Dakss et al. discloses that it is known in the art to immobilize a particle (11) with respect to an optical fiber (16) using a cured liquid composition (14) wherein the particle is disposed on or at the exterior surface of the cured liquid composition (See column 3, lines 20-40).

In view of these disclosures, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to immobilize the analysis particles of the modified primary reference using a cured liquid composition as suggested by the references of Pope and Dakss et al. for the known and expected result of providing an alternative means recognized in the art to achieve the same result, immobilization of the analysis particles relative to the optical sensing components. This immobilization technique allows the analysis particle to be in direct contact with the test sample.

With respect to claim 50, manufacture of the test device as suggested above would meet the method steps recited in claim 50.

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With respect to claim 109, the sensing elements comprise a polymer (See column 7, lines 20-41).

With respect to claim 110, the reference of Walt et al. discloses that the sensing elements can be made of polyethylene glycol hydrogel (See column 18, lines 3-20).

With respect to claims 111-118, the reference of Walt et al. discloses a number of receptors that can be used and produce a signal when they interact with an analyte. The reference also discloses a number of methods for attachment of the receptor to the sensing element. The reference stresses that the method of attachment should not alter the functionality of the bioactive agent (See column 7, line 55, to column 12, line 62).

With respect to claims 98 and 100, the reference of Walt et al. discloses that the sensing elements can be made from a polymer (See column 7, lines 20-41).

With respect to claim 99, the sensing elements are placed near the surface of the liquid composition (See column 17, line 47, to column 18, line 2).

With respect to claim 101, the reference of Walt et al. discloses that the sensing elements can be made of polyethylene glycol hydrogel (See column 18, lines 3-20).

With respect to claims 102-108, the reference of Walt et al. discloses a number of receptors that can be used and produce a signal when they interact with an analyte. The reference also discloses a number of method for attachment of the receptor to the sensing element. The reference stresses that the method of attachment should not alter the functionality of the bioactive agent (See column 7, line 55, to column 12, line 62).

Response to Arguments

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6. With respect to the rejection of claims 76 and 109-118 under obviousness-type double patenting over U.S. Application 10/832,469 in view of Walt et al., Applicants argue (See page 7 of the response filed 4/20/06) that they disagree with the rejection but will consider filing a terminal disclaimer once the claims are indicated as being allowable.

In response, the rejection has been withdrawn because claims 117-143 have been cancelled in application 10/832,469.

7. With respect to the rejection of Claims 50, 76 and 98-118 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walt et al.(US 6,327,410) in view of Felder et al.(US 6,232,066), Chang et al.(US 6,350,620) or Ravkin et al.(US 2003/0008323), Applicants argue (See pages 7-10 of the response filed 4/20/06) that none of the cited references discloses that the sensing elements are disposed on or at an exterior surface of the cured liquid composition. Applicants stress that the procedure disclosed by reference of Walt et al. results in a film or membrane covering the sensing elements and as a result the elements are not “disposed on or at an exterior surface of the cured liquid composition”. Applicants further comment that the references of Felder et al., Chang et al. and Ravkin et al. do not cure the deficiency with respect to the reference of Walt et al.

In response, the rejection has been withdrawn in view of the amendments to the claims and Applicants’ related comments. However, a new ground of rejection has been made over the combination of Walt et al.(US 6,327,410) in view of Felder et al.(US 6,232,066), Chang et al.(US 6,350,620) or Ravkin et al.(US 2003/0008323) taken further in view of Pope (US 5,496,997) and Dakss et al.(US 4,269,648).

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8. With respect to claims 98-118, Applicants argue (See pages 10-14 of the response filed 4/20/06) that the dependent claims are independently patentable and generically argue that the dependent claims do not appear to be taught or suggested by the cited art.

In response, the prior art rejection of record under 35 USC 103 addresses each of the dependent claim limitations, Applicants' comments fail to specifically state why the cited prior art does not teach or suggest the specific limitations of these claims.

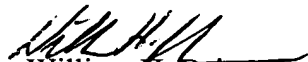
Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William H. Beisner whose telephone number is 571-272-1269. The examiner can normally be reached on Tues. to Fri. and alt. Mon. from 6:15am to 3:45pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gladys J. Corcoran can be reached on 571-272-1214. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


William H. Beisner
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1744

WHB